Hardships of foreign passport holders

4500. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the hardships faced by foreign passport holders due to the lengthy procedures at the airports, for getting customs and security clearances;

(b) if so, whether Government have taken measures for granting clearances for the foreign passport holders/tourists;

(c) whether Government consider separate counters at the airports for these sections; and

(d) the response of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) and (b) This Ministry has not received any representations regarding the hardships faced by foreign passport holders for getting customs and security clearances at the airports. However, the Government has taken several measures to expedite customs, security and immigration clearances in order to reduce the hardships faced by foreign passport holders/tourists at the international airports. These measures *inter alia,* include:

I. Manning of all X-ray machines and security check points at the international airports for expeditious security clearance.

II. With regard to Customs clearance, 95% of the in-coming passengers are cleared thorough the Green Channel, wherein the passengers simply walk through with their baggage. Only passengers carrying dutiable goods report to the Red Channel. Facilitation desks are in place to assist the outgoing passengers.

III. Computer systems have been upgraded, Immigration Control System Software, Passport Reading Machines (PRMs) and Questionable Document Examiner (QDX) machines have been installed at immigration counters in major international airports, to ensure expeditious immigration clearance.

(c) and (d) At present, there are separate immigration counters for Indians and Foreigners at Delhi, Chennai & Kolkata airports.